

FrugalMarketing.com

Frequent Buyer Programs

Reward your customers for coming back again and again.

(Shel Horowitz's Frugal Marketing Tip, February, 1998)

My supermarket has made me a very loyal customer?not because I'm so enamored of their freshness, selection, or prices (all of which are decent but not very different from the competition?but because the store makes it worth my while to shop there. It rewards my patronage in two ways:

1) If the cashier scans my customer card (conveniently placed on a small strip that goes on my key ring), I get "members-only" discounts on various products (don't even need to clip coupons).

2) When I pay with the store's own MasterCard, I get two frequent flier miles for every dollar I spend (one mile for purchases made elsewhere).

These two programs provide a significant incentive for me to shop there?and I spend several thousand dollars a year there as a result.

Many other stores in my town?pizza shops, cafes, bookstores, movie houses?offer some sort of frequent buyer program. Most of them punch a card and give you a free item when you reach ten or twelve punches. One store averages the ten highest purchases over \$10, and gives a credit for that amount?a policy that definitely encourages higher spending!

Airlines were among the first to develop frequent-buyer programs. But many other businesses have joined in. And why not? If ever there was a win-win scenario, it's rewarding customers who patronize you frequently. You get far more business with essentially no marketing outlay, and they get a discount.

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If you've got a particularly innovative frequent buyer program, drop me a line < email > and tell me about it. You may find yourself featured in an article in Down to Business, the new Web magazine we'll be launching this month on the Frugal Fun website (in pre-release now, at <http://www.frugalfun.com/dtb.html>). We're not announcing it publicly until we have at least 20 articles up, but you can get a sneak preview.

*Thank you reading this back issue of Shel Horowitz's Monthly Frugal Marketing Tips, published every month since May, 1997; please [click here to view the complete archives, grouped by subject](#). Shel is an internationally known copywriter and marketing consultant, author of *Grassroots Marketing Getting Noticed in a Noisy World* and several other books, and creator of the Frugal Marketing web site. [Please click here to contact Shel](#).*

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